

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 01531 300933Z

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ACTION CU-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 L-03 /018 W

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R 300909Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1113

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JOINT STATE/USIA MESSAGE

USIA FOR INA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SCUL

SUBJECT: SARG/US CULTURAL AGREEMENT

REF: A. DAMASCUS 190; B. STATE 49812

1. FOLLOWING UP ON DISCUSSIONS REGARDING CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM HELD DURING SPRING WITH MIN FORN AFFAIRS, CHARGE AND PAO CALLED ON AMBASSADOR AZIZ ALLOUNI, DIRECTOR OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS AT FOREIGN MINISTRY ON JULY 29.

2. ALLOUNI ALMOST AT ONE BROUGHT UP SUBJECT OF CULTURAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN SARG AND U.S. HE MENTIONED THAT SARG HAS FORMAL CULTURAL AGREEMENTS WITH MANY COUNTRIES, AND SUCH AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES WOULD BE HIGHLY APPROPRIATE.

3. SUBSEQUENTLY ALLOUNI AGREED THAT CULTURAL AGREEMENT SHOULD EXPRESS NO FINANCIAL OR PROGRAM COMMITMENTS ON EITHER SIDE, BUT STRESSED TI SHOULD NOT BE ROUTINE DOCUMENT. HE SAID U.S./SARG CULTURAL AGREEMENT SHOULD BE QUOTE MODEL FOR FUTURE UNQUOTE. ALLOUNI SAID BROAD CULTURAL AGREEMENT SHOULD BE FOLLOWED BY AN EXECUTIVE ACTION DOCUMENT HAMMERED

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OUT AT WOeking LEVEL, THEN SUBMITTED FOR BUDGET APPROVAL

AT HIGHER LEVELS. ALLOUNI IMPLIED THAT SARG WOULD HAVE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TO MAKE FOR CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE.

4. ALLOUNI ENDEAVORING TO COORDINATE WITH MINISTRIES OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND CULTURE ON PREPARATION OF SARG PROPOSAL FOR DRAFT AGREEMENT WHICH HE WISHED TO DISCUSS WITH PAO IN ABOUT 10 DAYS.

5. EMBASSY ENDORSES IDEA OF FORMAL CULTURAL AGREEMENT FOR TWO MAJOR REASONS. (A) IN ATMOSPHERE OF FRAGILE RELATIONS AND RECENT MEMORY OF DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY MANY INVOLVED IN USG-SPONSORED ACTIVITIES, A CULTURAL AGREEMENT WOULD FORM A SAFE CONTEXT WITHIN WHICH GENUINE COOPERATION COULD EXIST; AND (B) IN GOING THROUGH THE EXERCISE OF DRAFTING A CULTURAL AGREEMENT, SARG WOULD BE FORCED TO IDENTIFY AREAS OF IMMEDIATE CONCERN IN FIELD OF EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE.
SCOTES

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